

**METRO RTA
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
ROBERT K. PFAFF TRANSIT CENTER BOARD ROOM
TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020**

Trustees Present: (all via teleconference), Robert DeJournett, Nick Fernandez, Heather Heslop Licata, Vincent Rubino, David Prentice, Chuck Rector, Gary Spring, Donald Christian, Renee Greene, Mark Derrig, Louise Gissendaner

Trustees Absent: None

Staff Present: (all via teleconference) Angela Neeley, Dawn Distler, De Havilland McCall, Jarrod Hampshire, Jay Hunter, Molly Becker, Shawn Metcalf, Valerie Shea, Bambi Miller, Emily Baarson, Jason Popik, Lori Stokes, Matt Mullen, Robin Stevens, Tim Smith, PJ Lehman, Jamie Saylor, Claire Merrick, Halee Gerenday, Sue Ketelsen

Guests Present: None

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. DeJournett called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

In keeping with Governor DeWine's order of social distancing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, audience participation was suspended for this meeting. No comments had been conveyed to the Executive Director by the Friday prior to this meeting.

RECOGNITION

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. DeJournett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 31, 2020 meeting. Ms. Licata made a motion for approval, seconded by Mr. Derrig. The minutes were unanimously approved.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE & SERVICE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair: Mark Derrig

Mr. Derrig reported that the committee did meet. Director Hampshire reported during that meeting that no construction projects have been delayed, and that they are all on time and on budget. Cleaning at all METRO properties has increased, including sanitizing of buses. Operations reported 80% on time service. Unexpected overtime is only up slightly. Customer Care reported that paratransit was 93% on time. When surveyed, 98% of riders said they were satisfied.

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair: Nicholas Fernandez

Mr. Fernandez reported that the committee did meet. He asked Director Neeley to address the financial summaries. Revenue is projected to be down as free fares continue, along with not invoicing service for the University of Akron, DASH, or student passes. Sales tax disbursements, while expected to go down, are very difficult to anticipate. For example, April sales being down

due to the stay-at-home order will impact the July sales tax disbursement. Expenses reflect very little overtime, which is likely to keep going down. We have applied for a grant from the CARES Act. As for cash on hand, our investor bankers have been asked not to reinvest, but to keep matured investments liquid for the time being, until we know what is needed. In spite of revenue losses, our receipt of grants and CARES Act funding will keep a balanced budget through the end of the year and beyond.

PLANNING / MARKETING / RAIL COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair: Donald Christian

Mr. Christian asked that Director Shea report on the Committee's meeting. She relayed that the Committee did meet and that KPI's were reviewed. She also indicated that February numbers were basically on track with 2019. Pre-pandemic ridership was down somewhat at the start of March, and of course, dropped significantly once the stay-at-home order was put in place and the switch was made to contingency service. All routes are still running except for X60, DASH, and grocery service.

Marketing noted that some press attention occurred with our first positive diagnosis of Covid 19. The #IAmEssential campaign has been well received. All events through September have been cancelled, so the calendar is wide open for the near future. Reaching out to the community has successfully been taking place on social media.

THE APD GROUP REPORT

Chair: Chuck Rector

Mr. Rector reported that the APD Group (Asset Protection and Development) met in April. February numbers show 4 exits, 3 new hires, and 403 training hours. EEC Days in the Bullpen and at RKPTC have been suspended. There were 11 accidents in February, 91,000 miles between preventable accidents, and 3 lost time work injuries. Mr. Rector was pleased that transit employees are increasingly being considered front-line workers, as far as the respect and appreciation for essential workers goes.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Spring reported that an amendment to the by-laws had been proposed and was sent to the Board in early April for consideration. The first part of the amendment would create a 2-year term limit for officers on the Board, as well as a limit of two consecutive terms for officers. The second part proposed changing the job title of the Executive Director to Chief Executive Officer, which would be an update consistent with other transit authorities.

Mr. Spring indicated that, upon approval of the amendments, the Board could go forward with the yearly officer elections. He noted that the officers of both President and Vice President were recommended to remain the same.

After a brief discussion, it was concluded that the amendments to the by-laws could be treated as one motion, which was made by Mr. Spring. Mr. Derrig seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved, and the amendments will be made.

Mr. Spring then indicated that officer elections would take place. The committee nominated to retain the current officers; Mr. Robert DeJournett as President, and Mr. Nicholas Fernandez as Vice President. No other nominations were presented. The committee moved for the current officers to be reelected to 2-year terms, ending in March of 2022. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gissendaner. All members voted in favor, so the motion passed.

OFFICERS' REPORT

President: Mr. DeJournett extended the Board's condolences to Dawn and her family at the passing of her father. He also expressed appreciation to everyone for their attendance of the

committee meetings. They have been productive and well-attended. He suggested that maybe the committee meetings should continue being held via teleconference, regardless of distancing orders, since attendance, scheduling, and travel time seemed to all benefit. Mr. Fernandez agreed with this suggestion, and said that people seem even more engaged in some ways when meetings are held virtually.

Executive Director: Ms. Distler expressed her appreciation for the support of the Board and her team, and for the condolences extended to her by everyone. She gave her thoughts on where do we go from here and what is the new normal going to be. She believes that changes are going to happen slowly. METRO will need to decide what services we will continue to provide, and what are the best services to provide. People will want to resume some amount of travel, and we will need to provide that in a way that is safe, and that continues to create safe distancing. She pointed out Governor DeWine's recent order that any business wishing to stay open would be required to wear masks. In line with that, beginning Wednesday, April 29th, all METRO employees and passengers will be required to wear a face covering. Masks, both disposable and washable, are available in Dispatch. There is a plan being developed to put hand sanitizer on each of the buses for riders and drivers to use. There is also the hope of installing protective shields inside of buses as a barrier to help with distancing riders and drivers.

Ms. Distler acknowledged that we will need to look into the way in which we continue to provide our on-demand and paratransit services, while also keeping everyone safe. Resources will determine to what extent and for how long we can provide essential services to our community. She was pleased that METRO has been able to keep all active employees paid and with benefits. She feels that they are all heroes, and she acknowledged each group's contribution and expressed appreciation. Everyone has stayed productive, even if they have worked from home.

Ms. Distler expressed some concern about what may happen in the future with our federal funding, and with our sales tax revenue decreasing. But she also reiterated being impressed with and thankful for everyone continuing to come in to work and do their jobs well, and for having a positive attitude about the whole situation. She looks forward to the new ideas that will come from the METRO team during this time, to deal with our current and future circumstances.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to come before the Board, Mr. Christian made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Rector. The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved, and the meeting adjourned at 9:46 a.m.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

Pursuant to Section III, Article 3.2 of the Rules & Regulations of the METRO Regional Transit Authority, METRO has complied with the Notice and Notification to the public and news media.

DATE APPROVED: May 26, 2020

**ROBERT E. DEJOURNETT,
PRESIDENT**

**DAWN S. DISTLER,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/
SECRETARY-TREASURER**